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Related Applications

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This application is a continuation of United States Patent Application Serial Number 09/375,654, filed on August 17, 1999 and issued on May 15, 2001 as United States Patent Number 6,230,658, which is a continuation of United States Patent Application Serial Number 09/004,467, filed on January 8, 1998 and issued on November 2, 1999 as United States Patent Number 5,975,026.

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**IN THE CLAIMS:**

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Please cancel pending claims 1-38 and add the following new claims 39-88.

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39. A free stall divider for dividing an open area into separate stalls having respective stall spaces for animals, the free stall divider comprising:  
a base substantially aligned with a head space for the heads of two facing resting animals;  
and  
two dividing elements coupled to the base, each dividing element coupled to the base by a mounting portion, the dividing elements extending away from each other, away from the head space, and along stall spaces of two adjacent stalls.
40. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 39, wherein the dividing elements are removably coupled to the base.
41. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 39, wherein the dividing elements are permanently coupled to the base.
42. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 41, wherein the dividing elements are welded to the base.

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43. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 39, wherein:  
each dividing element comprises first and second ends and a joining portion;  
the first end is substantially centered above the base;  
the second end is coupled to the base; and  
the joining portion joins the first end to the second end.
44. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 43, wherein:  
the joining portion comprises a substantially horizontal section and an arcuate section;  
the substantially horizontal section extends vertically above and horizontally beyond an  
end of the base; and  
the arcuate section joins the substantially horizontal section to the second end.
45. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 39, wherein the dividing elements are formed  
integrally with the base.
46. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 39, wherein the dividing elements form a  
substantially symmetrical structure on opposite sides of the base.
47. A free stall divider for dividing an open area into separate stalls having respective stall  
spaces for animals, the free stall divider comprising:  
a substantially horizontally extending base substantially aligned with a head space for the  
heads of two facing resting animals; and  
two dividing elements coupled to the base, the dividing elements extending away from  
the base and alongside the stall spaces of two stalls in facing relationship with one  
another.
48. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 47, wherein the dividing elements are  
removably coupled to the base.
49. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 47, wherein the dividing elements are  
permanently coupled to the base.

50. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 49, wherein the dividing elements are welded to the base.

51. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 47, wherein:  
each dividing element comprises first and second ends and a joining portion;  
the first end is substantially centered above the base;  
the second end is coupled to the base; and  
the joining portion joins the first end to the second end.

52. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 51, wherein:  
the joining portion comprises a substantially horizontal section and an arcuate section;  
the substantially horizontal section extends vertically above and horizontally beyond an  
end of the base; and  
the arcuate section joins the substantially horizontal section to the second end.

53. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 47, wherein the dividing elements are formed integrally with the base.

54. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 47, wherein the dividing elements form a substantially symmetrical structure on opposite sides of the base.

55. A free stall divider assembly for animals, comprising:  
a substantially horizontally-extending base having two opposite sides defining two facing  
stall spaces for two facing resting animals, the base substantially aligned with a  
headspace for the heads of the two facing resting animals;  
a leg coupled to the base; and  
a divider coupled to the leg, the divider extending into the opposite sides of the base and  
alongside the two facing stall spaces.

56. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 55, wherein the divider comprises two dividing elements coupled together and to the leg and extending to opposite sides of the base.

57. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 55, wherein the leg is removably coupled to the base.

58. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 55, wherein the leg is permanently coupled to the base.

59. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 55, wherein the leg is welded to the base.

60. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 56, wherein:  
each dividing element comprises first and second ends and a joining portion;  
the first end is substantially centered above the base;  
the second end is coupled to the leg; and  
the joining portion joins the first end to the second end.

61. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 60, wherein the joining portion comprises an arcuate section between the first and second ends.

62. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 55, wherein the leg is formed integrally with the base.

63. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 55, wherein the divider is substantially symmetrical on opposite sides of the base.

64. A free stall divider for dividing an open area beside a wall into a stall for an animal, the free stall divider comprising:

a base substantially aligned with a head space for the head of a resting animal; and

a dividing element having

a first end defining a mounting portion coupled to the base; and

a second end coupled to the wall,

the dividing element extending along a stall space for the body of the animal.

65. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 64, wherein the mounting portion of the dividing element is removably coupled to the base.

66. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 64, wherein the mounting portion of the dividing element is permanently coupled to the base.

67. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 64, wherein the mounting portion of the dividing element is welded to the base.

68. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 64, wherein:  
the dividing element further comprises a joining portion between the first and second ends;  
the joining portion comprises a substantially horizontal section and an arcuate section;  
the substantially horizontal section extends vertically above and horizontally beyond an end of the base; and  
the arcuate section joins the substantially horizontal section to the first end.

69. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 64, wherein the dividing element is formed integrally with the base.

70. A free stall divider for dividing an open area beside a wall into a stall for an animal, the free stall divider comprising:

a substantially horizontally-extending base substantially aligned with a head space of a resting animal;

a dividing element coupled to the wall and extending away from the wall alongside a stall space defined by the stall, the dividing element also coupled to the base and extending away from the base alongside the stall space.

71. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 70, wherein the dividing element is removably coupled to the base.

72. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 70, wherein the dividing element is permanently coupled to the base.

73. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 70, wherein the dividing element is welded to the base.

74. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 70, wherein:  
the dividing element comprises first and second ends and a joining portion;  
the first end is coupled to the wall;  
the second end is coupled to the base;  
the joining portion joins the first end to the second end, and comprises a substantially horizontal section and an arcuate section;  
the substantially horizontal section extends vertically above and horizontally beyond an end of the base; and  
the arcuate section joins the substantially horizontal section to the second end.

75. The free stall divider as claimed in claim 70, wherein the dividing element is formed integrally with the base.

76. A method of dividing an open area into separate free stalls for animals, the method comprising:

providing a base substantially aligned with a head space for the heads of two facing resting animals;

positioning two dividing elements to extend away from one another, away from the head space, and along a stall space on either side of the base;

coupling the two dividing elements to the base, each dividing element coupled to the base by a mounting portion; and

coupling the dividing elements to one another.

77. The method as claimed in claim 76, wherein coupling the dividing elements to the base includes coupling at least one leg to the base and coupling the mounting portions of the dividing elements to the at least one leg.

78. The method as claimed in claim 76, wherein a continuous loop is formed by coupling the dividing elements to one another.

79. The method as claimed in claim 76, wherein positioning the dividing elements includes positioning the dividing elements symmetrically with respect to the base.

80. A method of dividing an open area into separate free stalls for animals, the method comprising:

locating a substantially horizontally extending base between two stall spaces for animals, wherein the base is substantially aligned with a head space for the heads of two facing resting animals in the two stall spaces;

positioning the two dividing elements to extend away from the base and alongside the two stall spaces;

coupling the two dividing elements to the base; and

coupling the two dividing elements together.

81. The method as claimed in claim 80, wherein coupling the dividing elements to the base includes coupling at least one leg to the base and coupling the dividing elements to the at least one leg.

82. The method as claimed in claim 80, wherein a continuous loop is formed by coupling the dividing elements together.

83. The method as claimed in claim 80, wherein positioning the dividing elements includes positioning the dividing elements symmetrically with respect to the base.

84. A method of dividing an open area into separate free stalls for animals, the method comprising:

locating a substantially horizontally-extending base between two facing stall spaces for two facing resting animals, the base substantially aligned with a headspace for the heads of the two facing resting animals;  
positioning a divider upon the base so that the divider extends from opposite sides of the base alongside the two facing stall spaces; and  
coupling the divider to the base by at least one leg extending to the base.

85. The method as claimed in claim 84, wherein the divider is defined by two dividing elements.

86. The method as claimed in claim 85, further comprising coupling the dividing elements together after positioning the divider upon the base.

87. The method as claimed in claim 84, wherein positioning the divider includes positioning the divider symmetrically with respect to the base.